

NORTHGATE STAKEHOLDERS GROUP DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

**North Seattle Community College
ED 2843A in the Dr. Peter Ku Education Building
Thursday, November 18, 2004, 4:05 pm – 6:30 pm**

The Northgate Stakeholders Group (Group) held its tenth meeting at North Seattle Community College on Thursday, November 18, 2004 from 4:05 pm to 6:30 pm. The purposes of the meeting were to:

- Approve meeting summary #9;
- Review input from the November 9 Community Forum and debrief the format;
- Complete deliberation on the Northgate Mall development and finalize the advice;
- Hear reports and updates
- Review the future schedule of meetings

Welcome

Welcome, Chair Ron LaFayette

Ron LaFayette convened the meeting at 4:05 PM and welcomed the Stakeholders to their ninth meeting. After reviewing the agenda, he announced that **the next Stakeholders Group meeting was scheduled for Feb. 1, 2005 at 4:00 PM** in the Peter Ku Education Building (the usual meeting room).

The Chair asked if there were comments on the Oct. 26 Draft Meeting Summary. A member noted that on page 7, “C” street should be corrected to read “SEA” street. With that change, the summary was approved.

Announcements

- Molly Burke announced that the **Northgate Arts Council was forming and a meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 30**, at the Bank of America (NE 125th and 30th Ave NE). Refreshments would be served.
- John Lombard announced an evening of jazz on Friday, **December 3**, as a fundraiser for Thornton Creek Alliance.
- The Group was reminded of upcoming **CTIP Subcommittee meetings on Thursday, Dec. 16 and Tuesday, January 11 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM at the NSCC Board Room** to discuss “Existing and Future Conditions.”
- On **Monday, December 6** Simon Property Group will go before the Design Review Board for Early Design Guidance.

CTIP Subcommittee Report

Dr. LaFayette invited Julie Matlick of Seattle's Department of Transportation (SDOT) to the front. Bruce Keiser briefly reported on the November 16 CTIP Subcommittee meeting. The focus, he said, was on technical assumptions and policy considerations. He noted that the geographic area for the plan was the boundaries in the 1992 Northgate Comp Plan, not the Northgate Urban Center. The area is bounded on the north by 130th, on the east by Lake City Way, on the south by NE 85th, and on the west by Wallingford. (The boundary streets themselves will not be part of the study.) He also noted that the CTIP study team plans to coordinate with WSDOT so the state will have input as the I-5 rehabilitation study proceeds.

He said that Sound Transit is expected to reach the University of Washington by 2010, to reach Northgate by 2030, and to continue farther north. The study does not assume that Northgate will be the northern terminus. He said the team is not sure how to account for the Monorail but it will be considered.

With respect to financing sources, he said the team will try to identify funding and financing options. The study will also include benchmarks to measure performance. He said he was giving a progress report and noted that if the Stakeholders wanted to provide input, they should do so.

- *Question:* With respect to the decision to exclude Lake City Way, a member asked how it would be considered, and how not be considered, given the huge impact it has on cut-through traffic.
- *Response* (Julie Matlick): To avoid scope creep, she said, it was necessary to limit the study but she said the study would focus on the cut-through streets.
- *Comment:* A member noted that CTIP adopted the boundaries of the Overlay that skirted the commercial zoning on Lake City Way.

Several members expressed concern about not treating Northgate as at least an "interim" northern terminus in the CTIP study.

Stakeholders were invited to review maps created through the study and provide corrections. Ms. Matlick indicated that the maps would be on the SDOT website by the week of November 22. In response to a request for hard copies of the map rather than electronic versions, SDOT sent around a sign-up sheet so members could request hard copies.

Stakeholders were again invited to attend upcoming Subcommittee meetings and to read Subcommittee reports when they are sent out for review. It was also noted that David Harrison would attend the January 11 Subcommittee meeting as the basis for drafting advice. He will provide the draft to the Subcommittee for review before revising and sending the draft advice to the full Group in advance of the February 1 meeting. At that meeting the group is expected to provide advice on assumptions and existing conditions.

Ms. Matlick also offered to have SDOT come to community meetings to discuss CTIP and to get additional comments.

Stormwater Management at the Library/Community Center

The Chair invited Alex Harris of Seattle Public Library to speak to the Stakeholders in response to questions that were raised at the November 9 Community Forum about the elimination of a “rain garden” from plans for the new civic center. Ms. Harris also introduced Doreen Gavin, civil engineer with AHBL, Miranda Maupin (Seattle Public Utilities, SPU), Tim Motzer (Seattle Parks) and Richard Gelb (Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment) who were available to answer questions.

Referring the Stakeholders to a fact sheet on bright yellow paper, Ms. Harris summarized the key information as follows. The “civic center” will occupy 2 ½ acres which is largely impervious surface now. Current plans call for reducing the amount of impervious surface to about 30% and addressing water quality and detention on-site. A Vortex system would be installed to address oil, grease and sediment. The proposed detention system, designed for a 100-year storm, would reduce the velocity of stormwater and the resulting overcharging of the system downstream. She said it is hoped that the system will capture water that can be used for summer irrigation.

In response to the question of why the rain garden was deleted from the plans, she said the initial estimate for the rain garden of \$37,000 had grown to \$78,000. While everyone liked the educational benefit of the rain garden and the fact that it had water quality benefits, once they realized they could provide for water quality without it, it was cut. She offered to make available the list of cuts with the associated costs.

Member Shawn Oleson who serves on the Project Advisory Team which met on November 16, offered the following comments. Based on his own experience with the vortex system in past work, he said knew it controls silts and fine particles and does a very good job of taking dirty water in and producing potable water at the far end. He noted that it does have to be cleaned periodically. He noted that Tim Motzer had raised concerns at the PAT meeting about possible settling or soil liquifaction that could result if rain forest water seeped around the building. In response to skepticism expressed about possible building damage from the rain garden, Tim Motzer briefly described the project team’s geotechnical concerns about the rain garden. He said the building would rest atop 20 feet of fill above bedrock and much more geotechnical work would be required to understand the complexities the rain garden would involve from geotechnical perspective.

A member said that she had asked for cost comparison data on the vortex system and natural drainage, for technical information about the water quality performance of each, and for State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review. Ms. Harris responded that the vortex system was already in the budget and that the project would gain a net saving of \$78,000 by the change.

Another member asked if the vortex system, as originally sized, was adequate to handle the large area. In response, Doreen Gavin said that the initial system had been enlarged to take care of the parking lot. With respect to water quality, she said, the vortex system would remove 80% of total suspended solids whereas the rain garden, which uses more methods, would remove 80% of total suspended solids and 50% of metals.

John Lombard indicated that Thornton Creek Alliance would send a letter expressing its disappointment at the change. Another member pointed out that the Stakeholders have been pushing Simon Property Group to use natural drainage but now the City has said it can't do so for the library/community center. Another member asked, if the money to fund the rain garden could be found, would it be preferable. She suggested that perhaps the five neighborhoods around Northgate could work together to find the money. In response, Ms. Harris said she recognized the concern but did not see how it could be considered and still get the bid documents out by the January 5 target date.

Another member commented on the importance of having the library and community center proceed on schedule and supported use of the vortex system to avoid building damage from a 100-year rain. This perspective was echoed by another member who said he had initially wanted to keep the rain garden but had been unaware of the engineering constraints. He agreed that it was more important to get going.

At this point, the Chair noted that the Stakeholders were not giving a collective response on this issue and encouraged members to continue to talk to Ms. Harris and the project team individually.

Northgate Redevelopment Proposal Advice

Dr. LaFayette then invited David Harrison to facilitate the discussion of the draft advice. He also introduced Joe Stallsmith of Simon and Miranda Maupin of SPU.

Mr. Harrison began by noting the intentional formality of the process by which the Group provides its advice and the significant impact that the Group's discussions have had on the draft proposals that have come before the Group, leading up to final advice. With respect to the Simon proposal, he noted that this was the fourth meeting at which the Group had had discussions. Each time, he said, the Group had raised issues and had gotten responses at the next session.

He said that the draft advice on the Northgate Mall redevelopment recognized that there are additional steps that will happen in the coming months and acknowledged the Group's intention to continue to monitor the process.

He noted that the input from the public at the November 9 Community Forum was consistent with the Group's input. He also pointed out that John Lombard had provided a significant redrafting of the section that addressed stormwater.

He then asked the Group for questions and comments.

- *Comment* (Gary Weber): He said that Simon had a concern about point #3 regarding improving pedestrian safety to the mall from the north (across Northgate Way). He said that Simon will remain engaged but that this issue is outside the scope of advice because Simon is focused on the west and this issue affects the north.
- *Response* (David Harrison): He agreed with the point and noted other examples (like the 5th Ave NE Streetscape) that talked about general needs referenced in the draft advice that

were not specific to Simon. He said that the Stakeholders had identified other agencies, like the City and Metro Transit, that have considerable responsibility for actions beyond those in Simon's purview.

- *Comment:* A member concurred with Mr. Harrison, noting that the intent was not to put full responsibility on Simon to address the problem. She said she looked at the area as a whole, with pedestrians in mind, and that pedestrian movement would occur regardless of whether the development is on the west side.

It was moved, seconded and approved to revise the wording in #3 by noting that the City has not yet developed plans to address safety. Tony Mazzella (SDOT's CTIP project manager) indicated that this issue is listed as an item for next steps and said that SDOT and Simon would jointly evaluate it.

In response to a question about possible tenants, Mr. Weber indicated that Simon does not identify tenants until they execute their leases. He noted that a number of retailers have their own store designs and "looks." In response to a question about how this design uncertainty works with Design Review, Mr. Stallsmith said that Simon would take the best information it had at the time, recognizing that plans evolve. If there were to be a change, it would be addressed when the tenant applies for a building permit. Mr. Stallsmith said Simon has design criteria which are spelled out to applicants.

When asked if there were drawings that showed 1st Ave. NE, Mr. Weber said that Simon did not yet have a design for the proposed sidewalk. Recalling an issue raised at the Oct. 26 meeting, Ron Postuma said he had measured the space between the rockery and the street on 1st Ave. NE at NE 103rd. The space measures 12 feet, he said, leaving room for a sidewalk and "something." Mr. Stallsmith also said that what happened at the corner of 5th Ave NE and NE 103rd would be tenant dependent.

When asked if demographics were the reason why no grocery store was proposed for the Simon or Lorig developments, Bruce Lorig said that grocery stores felt there was already too much competition in the area. Mr. Weber added that the retailers Simon was talking to would draw from a larger radius than the surrounding communities.

It was moved and seconded that the Group approve draft advice #4, including revised wording for #3 and the revised section on stormwater. Sixteen seats voted in favor. There were no abstentions or opposing votes.

A member commented to Mr. Stallsmith that the community deeply regretted the fact that the current development included nothing on the eastside and made a plea to add retail and streetscape development there as soon as possible.

A member shared with the Group the fact that Design Review would use the Northgate Area Guidelines in its review of the Simon proposal. In response to a request for volunteers to prepare for the Early Design Guidance meeting, the following individuals raised their hands to participate on a Design Review Subcommittee: Barbara Maxwell, Cheryl Klinker, Colleen Mills, Michelle Rupp and Velva Maye.

Mr. Stallsmith expressed his thanks to each and every one of the Stakeholders. He said that when Simon got started, they couldn't predict how this would go. He said he hoped they felt Simon had taken their comments seriously and acknowledged that a lot of work remained to be done.

He said Simon was working with the City on natural drainage and was serious about it. Miranda Maupin said the City hoped to have results on natural drainage in mid December and committed to get results to the Stakeholders when they were ready.

In response to a question about the timeline for the improvements (beyond those outlined in the blue handout for the permitting process), Mr. Stallsmith said that Simon was interested in starting demolition and beginning construction as soon as the Master Use Permitting process was complete, late spring 2005. Construction was expected to take about a year.

It was agreed that the Group's advice would be sent to the Mayor, City Council and to DPD for distribution to the Design Review Board early the following week and that Ron LaFayette or Michelle Rupp would deliver it on behalf of the Stakeholders at the December 6 Design Review meeting.

5th Ave. NE Streetscape, Subcommittee Report

Barbara Maxwell briefly described the Subcommittee's report. She said she was disappointed that the transmittal letter was not included in the distribution with the Subcommittee's report because it explained the circumstances which led to the Subcommittee to sending it before the full Group could review and approve it. The Subcommittee had met on November 1 with Sandra Woods of SDOT; this was their first chance to see the detailed drawings. She said they had comments on each design sheet. It then took some time to write up their comments. Since Ms. Woods was to meet with the Design Commission on November 4, there was only a short time to prepare the report and send it so their input could be considered. Otherwise, it would have arrived after the fact.

Ms. Maxwell then reviewed the Subcommittee report in detail and Sandra Woods responded to questions and comments.

After the discussion, the Chair asked if the Group concurred with the Subcommittee report. The Group voted unanimously in support of the Subcommittee report, converting it from a Subcommittee Report to a Stakeholders Group report.

In response to a query from Ms. Woods about the Group's preferred format for a response from SDOT, it was agreed that a formal report should be sent.

Sound Transit's Northgate Station Location Recommendation

Phil Harrison of Sound Transit provided a copy of a motion that the Sound Transit Board had considered and adopted at its meeting earlier in the day. It described a station spanning NE 103rd Street, east of 1st Ave NE and west of the existing Northgate Transit Center as the

preferred location and configuration for the Northgate light rail station to advance to preliminary engineering.

The action also authorized further study of an elevated station located above 1st Ave NE between NE 100th and NE 103rd Streets, to determine the feasibility and relative merits of this option. Sound Transit staff are instructed in the memo to report study findings to the Board by January 2005 at which time the Board may choose to give further consideration to this station option. (This alternative spans the street, “like a roof over the street,” and avoids property impacts to the mall and to the businesses to the south.)

A member asked a question sparked by reports about an elevated monorail system in Japan which is losing money because people are reluctant to walk up stairs to access the monorail. She asked if there were a way to leave the mall and the transit center and, remaining on the same level, to access the train. Mr. Harrison said that Sound Transit would have to work with Simon to see how it would work. A member said she felt that having Sound Transit bring customers in at the mall level would be an asset to the mall.

When asked about the total square footage this option might take from the mall, Mr. Harrison said that the mall would lose about 150 parking stalls, so there would be impacts and costs.

Another member asked if the 1st Ave NE proposal would eliminate impacts to the mall. Mr. Harrison said there would be less impact to the mall from that option but that it would have other impacts that would need to be considered.

Another member asked if Sound Transit had looked at other areas besides Northgate. Mr. Harrison indicated that Sound Transit was aware of other planning processes but that what is proposed at Northgate is all that is in the EIS.

Phil Harrison indicated that next steps were to take the preferred alternative in this decision to 30% design. In January, he said, the Board will get a report about the option that spans 1st Ave NE and make a decision. In May, he said, the Board will get a package, with recommendations on how to fund it. He said cost estimates would determine how far north the system should go. A public vote would then be required, probably in 2006. The system could open as early as 2013.

Community Forum Debrief

The Chair asked Stakeholders for their feedback on the format of the second community forum. Comments were as follows:

- The organization by the City departments had worked very well in the open house portion of the meeting to let attendees get information before they commented during the formal part of the meeting.
- The displays were considered an excellent addition to the forum but it was recommended that they be spread out around the room rather than concentrated at one end.
- Attending as Stakeholders let them talk to the participants, ask about their interests, and direct participants to the right person. Otherwise, the tables were a bit confusing.

- While the format had worked well, the first community forum had been more dynamic, more interesting.
- Shorter forums were recommended in the future, with less talking by the Stakeholders and more talking by members of the public.

Adjournment

As there were no public comments, the Chair complimented the Stakeholders on all of the productive work the Group had accomplished, wished them a wonderful holiday break, and adjourned the meeting at 6:30 PM.

Meeting Attendance

Representatives and Alternates of the **Northgate Stakeholders Group** in attendance were:

King County/Metro: Rep. Ron Postuma
Simon Property Group: Rep. Gary Weber, Alt. Sam Stalin
Maple Leaf Community Council: Alt. Mel Vannice
Licton Springs Community Council: Rep. Jerry Owens
Haller Lake Community Council: Rep. Velva Maye
Pinehurst Community Council: Rep. Lorna Mrachek
Victory Heights Community Council: Rep. Brad Cummings, Alt. Molly Burke
Thornton Creek Alliance: Rep. John Lombard; Alt. Cheryl Klinker
Thornton Creek Legal Defense: Rep. Janet Way
Northgate Chamber of Commerce: Shaiza Damji
North Seattle Community College: Rep. Ronald LaFayette, Alt. Bruce Kieser
Senior Housing: Rep. Jeanne Hayden; Alt. Sandra Morgan
Renters/Condo Owners: Rep. Debra Fulton, Alt. Brad Mason
Multi-Family Housing Developers: Rep. Colleen Mills
Businesses Outside the Mall: Rep. Michelle Rupp
At-large: Rep. Shawn Oleson, Alt. Barbara Maxwell

Members of the Triangle Associates facilitation team included Alice Shorett, David Harrison and Vicki King.